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ABSTRACT
The Materials and Activities for Teachers and Children (MATCH Box) project was developed in 1965 to provide for the relatively intensive treatment of a subject over two weeks through materials geared to the elementary school level. Each MATCH Box contains materials, equipment, supplies and activities that work together to foster the teaching/learning of specific subjects. NETSILIK ESKIMOS helps the children explore the activities and beliefs of a seal-oriented Eskimo culture living today in Pelly Bay, Canada. The unit centers on the Netsilik winter seal-hunting season. The children learn about the complex hunting technology which has evolved about the seal, the social relations of the Netsilik people, and their mythology and leisure activities. The Netsilik MATCH Box contains, among other things, hunting implements, indigenous artifacts, films, recordings, an information book, and a replica of the winter camp. The unit is designed not only to inform but also to stimulate questions and to develop an empathy for other cultures as well as a clearer understanding of our own. (SH)

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NETSILIK ESKIMOS

THE MATCH BOX PROJECT

Materials and Activities for Teachers and CHildren

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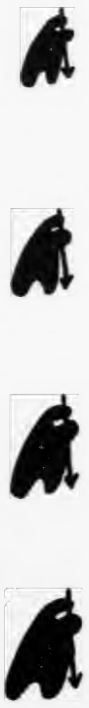

BY

NANCY OLSON
ELLEN SHAPIRO

TEACHER'S GUIDE TO

NETSILIK ESKIMOS

GRADES 3 - 4

PROTOTYPE EDITION

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IN WINTERTIME THE NETSILIK MOVE OUT ONTO THE ICE OF PELLY BAY TO HUNT SEAL...

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ABOUT THE MATCH BOX PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

MOST of us when hearing about Eskimos think of long winters, igloos, dog sleds, and fur parkas. Few of us realize that within the millions of square miles that make up the circumpolar North there exist many Eskimo peoples living many styles of life. While the Arctic environment has inevitably shaped these peoples into basically similar patterns of living, differences become apparent when various groups are compared. This MATCH Box focuses on one particular group, the Netsilik, who exemplify both unique patterns of life and patterns common to all Eskimos.

The Netsilik Eskimos are a seal-hunting people inhabiting the Pelly Bay region north of the Arctic Circle in Canada. Within the total tribe of about 250 people there is a small group whom the children will get to know through the films. It is this group of Eskimos, alive today in the 1960's, who actually made the Eskimo objects in the Box. By focusing on this one group, using films of them, and artifacts made by them, this unit has a depth

that should lead to an understanding of Eskimo life beyond that of common knowledge.

In making the Netsilik Eskimo Box, we have tapped various sources. The writings of the Danish explorer Knud Rasmussen, the first to intimately observe the Netsilik, have given valuable information about their life at the turn of the century. Dr. Asen Balikci of the Université de Montreal studied the Netsilik in the 1960's and provided us with both written reports and personal assistance. Educational Services, Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts, has supplied excellent documentary films taken in the Netsilik area from 1963 to 1965. Father André Goussaert of the Pelly Bay Mission supervised the making and transportation of the Eskimo objects which give the Box an authenticity otherwise impossible to attain.

• • • • •

WHEN the Danish explorer Rasmussen visited the Netsilik in 1923, they were still living in their traditional ways. Their social organization, their religion, and their use of native materials were minimally affected by Western contacts. Yet even at this time the Netsilik were using fragments of

iron and steel salvaged from wrecked vessels or acquired through trade to make tools and weapons. During the 1920's traditional Netsilik life began to change. Guns gradually replaced spears and bows; the Hudson Bay Company established a trading post and introduced trapping techniques; in 1935, a missionary settled at Pelly Bay and the Netsilik abandoned certain religious beliefs for Catholicism; in more recent years canvas, duffel, tea, flour, and tobacco have increasingly become a part of their material culture. The Netsilik Eskimo Box is about the traditional Netsilik people as Rasmussen found them in the 1920's.

In the 1960's when the Canadian anthropologist Asen Balikci visited the Netsilik, he found a very different situation from that encountered by Rasmussen. Even so, Balikci's account leads one to conclude that, despite changes, many traditional practices still exist. For example, hunting seals at their breathing holes is still carried on in the traditional way. Most of the people still live in igloos during the winter and tents in the summer; most prefer furs to manufactured clothing. Since many Netsilik ways depicted in the Box are still carried on today, we speak in the present

tense throughout the unit; yet the Box is technically a reconstruction of life at Pelly Bay 40 years ago.

Netsilik means "people of the seal." The unit centers on one part of the Netsilik yearly cycle, the mid-winter, when they hunt seal. During the dark winter months the seal shapes many parts of Netsilik life. A complex hunting technology has evolved around this animal. Food, heat, light, shelter, and some clothing are all provided by the seal. Further, seal hunting shapes the social relations of Netsilik camp life, and is important in mythology and leisure activities. It would be wrong to imply that all Netsilik life centers on this one mammal; the Eskimos also hunt and use fish, caribou, and musk-oxen. Yet because the seal is so essential to Netsilik life, we have chosen to use it as the focus of the Box.

• • • • •

THE Netsilik Box has been designed as a complete "package", but it could easily become part of a longer-range study of Eskimos, Arctic life, or comparative cultures.

The lessons attempt to follow the sequence of activities at the winter camp. They begin with

setting up camp, go on to hunting the seal, and conclude as the Netsilik move to a new campsite. We suggest that you use the lessons in the order given. However, we encourage you to make additions and elaborations within each lesson.

Through the various materials and activities in the Box we have tried to give the children a sense of the realities of Netsilik life, especially in its relationship to the seal. We have included artifacts created by the Netsilik themselves, films, recordings, an information book, a replica of the winter camp, and other things. Once they have been introduced, these materials should be left out in the classroom for free time use. Let the students know that the hand-made artifacts are rare, valuable, and virtually irreplaceable.

Background on the Netsilik Eskimos is placed in the hands of the children in the form of the "Netsilik Book," which the children can read on their own. Here information on husky dogs, clothing, weather, amulets, hunt tools, and so on, is written on individual cards. The children can use them for answering their own questions, for doing research, for learning an activity, or for just learning more about the Netsilik. We urge you to read the Netsilik Book yourself before launching the Box.

Before concluding, we would like to clarify three thoughts which have shaped the design of the Box:

-We have tried to set up situations in which the children can experiment, become involved, and make discoveries about Eskimos on their own. For example, in the first lesson the children examine a snow knife, a snow probe, a hood and a pair of boots to see how much they can figure out about the people from them.

-The Box is intended to create a questioning frame of mind in the children. For instance, the Netsilik Book does not simply provide information about Eskimo life, but should stimulate new questions.

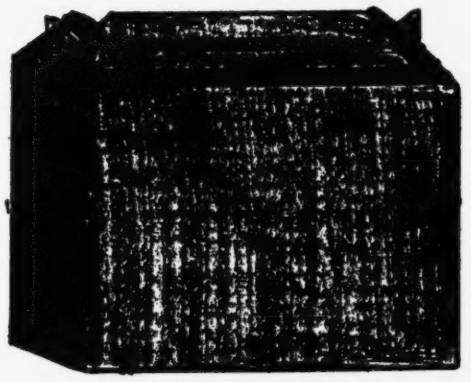
-The activities are designed so that the materials lead beyond themselves. Learning how to use an Eskimo bow-drill is fun and worthwhile in itself; but taken no further than that, the exercise falls short of its potential. An understanding of bow-drilling placed fully in its context should lead children to speculate about not only this tool, but about tools and processes in general. Similarly, a study of Netsilik life should lead to a discussion of American life and of man in general.

MATERIALS IN THE BOX

SUITCASE

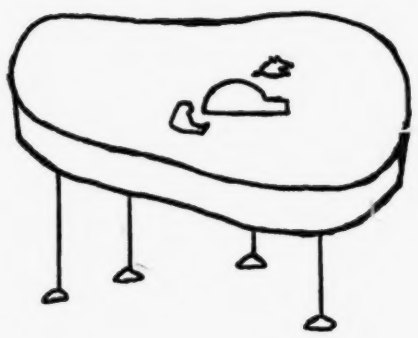
Teacher's Guide

films--"The Trek"
"The Seal Hunt"
"The Drum Dance"
The films are in color, have some natural sound, and no narration. Film notes are with the lesson plans.



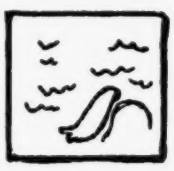
The suitcase contains the materials shown on this page.

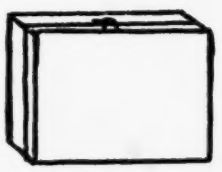
diagram of winter camp
&
map
(reverse side)



ice board and figures--

A platform with detachable legs representing the ice of Pelly Bay. The figures represent the people, the camp, the animals below the ice,etc.





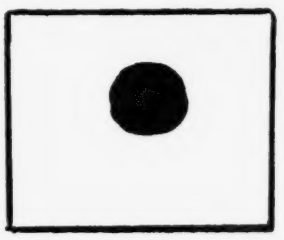
Netsilik Book--
A box of cards about the Netsilik.

seal picture

drum &
drumstick

breathing hole replica

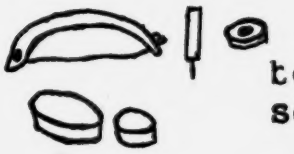
record--
"Hunter's Story"
"Nuliajuk"
"Drum Dance Music"
"Story Told in Eskimo Language"



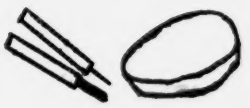
SEAL CONTAINER

The seal container holds the seal skin and the Netsilik artifacts shown on this page. The artifacts were made by the Netsilik and are rare and hard to replace. Notes on them are found in the Netsilik Book and in the lesson plans. With the seal skin inside and the doors open, the container represents a seal breathing hole. This should not be revealed until the second lesson.

seal skin



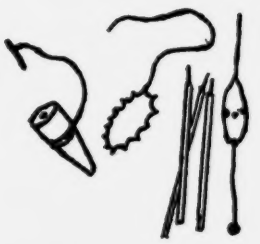
tow-drill & soapstone



gouges & soapstone

scraper & skin

needle case, sinew & skin

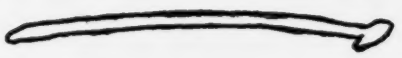


games

bone game

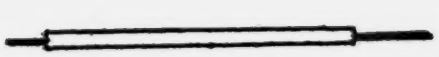
boots

hood



snow probe

snow knife

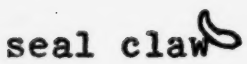


harpoon

breathing hole searcher

seal oil & cotton

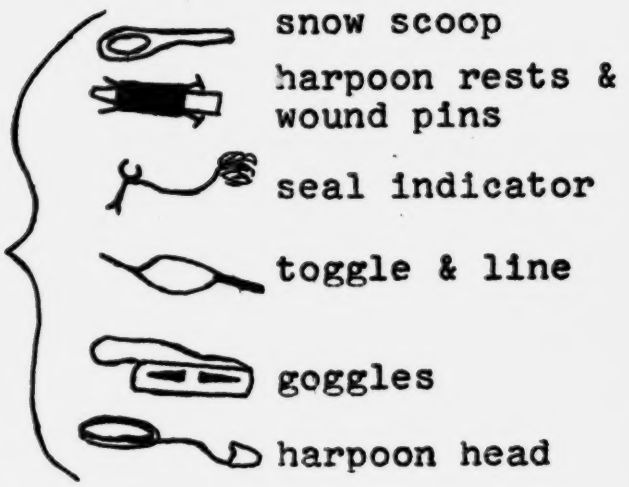
Arctic cotton



seal claw

amulet

hunter's bag



snow scoop

harpoon rests & wound pins

seal indicator

toggle & line

goggles

harpoon head

SUMMARY OF LESSONS

These lessons focus on the mid-winter camp at Pelly Bay. Here, the Netsilik hunt seal. During this time, seal shapes the life of the Netsilik people.

1. NETSILIK ESKIMOS

The children examine four objects foreign to them, trying to "read" as much as possible from them. Next they see these four objects in a film of the Netsilik trekking out onto the ice to set up a winter camp. Finally the children locate the land of the Netsilik on a map, examine a diagram of the camp, and learn the Eskimo names of some of the people on the trek.

2. SEALS

By setting up the "ice board" representing Pelly Bay, the children see clearly the position of the Netsilik on top of the ice. and the seals below the ice. Using the seal skin in its breathing hole container, the children then learn about seal breathing habits. Finally, they discuss why the Netsilik have come out onto the winter ice.

3. SEAL HUNT I

The children examine three of the seal hunting tools, and try to figure out their use. A film then shows in detail how hunters use these same tools to catch seals. All the other hunting tools are brought out and the children begin their own "tool collections" by drawing accurate copies of them.

4. SEAL HUNT II

The children re-create the actual behavior of a hunter at the breathing hole by using the hunting tools and a replica of a seal's breathing hole. The seal hunt film can be shown again.

5. SEAL BELIEFS

The class listens to the story of a hunter whose family is hungry because he hasn't caught any seals. They learn some of the Netsilik beliefs about seals, and act out the rituals through which the hunter seeks to please the seal's "soul", and so induce the seal to come to him.

6. THE CAMP

Using real Eskimo tools and other materials from the Arctic, the children experiment with some of the everyday activities of Netsilik life: making a soapstone lamp, scraping skins, sewing, etc. This in turn leads to a discussion of how closely the Eskimo economy is tied to sealing, and how completely the seal is utilized by the Eskimo.

7. NULIAJUK, THE SEA SPIRIT

Lighting the soapstone lamp they made, the pupils gather in an imaginary igloo--just as the Eskimos do during the long winter--to hear the story of Nuliajuk, the sea spirit. The children then make a mural depicting scenes from it.

8. DRUM DANCE

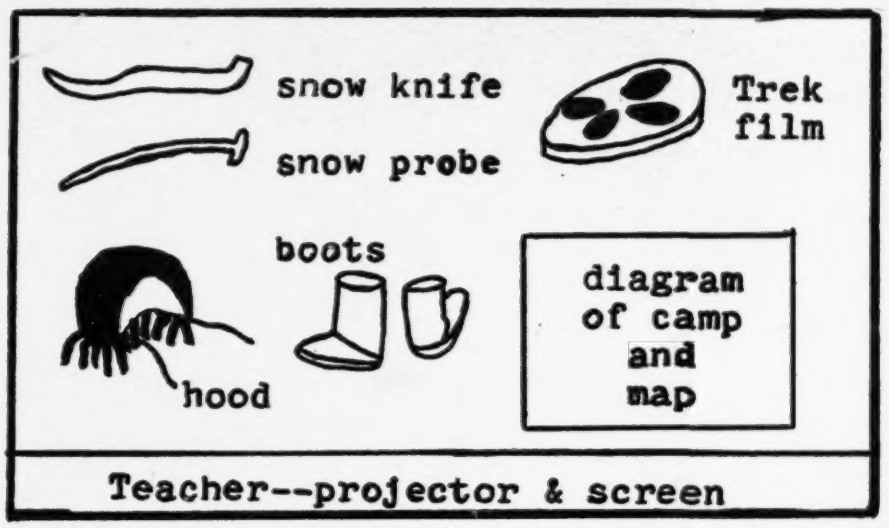
This last lesson shows the children how to enjoy themselves as the Netsilik do. They watch Itimangnark doing a drum dance (on film), and then try doing it themselves with drum and song.

LESSON PLANS

1. NETSILIK ESKIMOS

FOCUS:

Establish empathy with the Netsilik Eskimos as real people, living today in the barren Arctic.



ACTIVITIES:

1. Examine clothes and tools....

This activity is designed to set up an attitude of careful "reading" of artifacts that will be helpful throughout the unit.

snow knife
snow probe
hood
boots

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Tell the children that they are about to see and handle some very rare objects made by people living somewhere in the world today. These objects are not toys, but are useful, everyday items to the people who made them. (Note: This activity works best when the children come to it with no idea they are going to study Eskimos.)

Divide the children into four groups and give each group an object to examine. Every few minutes rotate the objects until each group has seen all four of them. Focus the children's examination by asking them to consider the questions you put on the board as they look at the tools. Encourage "reading" as much as possible from the articles; that is, let the pupils "brainstorm" each other with ideas and suggestions. Do not be negative even about far-fetched or illogical comments from the class; try to keep them talking and guessing and stimulating each other. Board questions might be:

- What people might have made these objects? What could they be used for?

- How much can you discover about these people just by examining things they have made?

After all groups have handled the artifacts, begin a general discussion of their ideas. It is at this point that you can emphasize relevant points and pose questions that will lead to a deeper probing into the lives of the people who made these objects. Keep this discussion brief. It might take this direction:

- Where might the people who made these things live? (possible answers: cold lands away from cities and stores, near wild animals,...)

- Why do they have this kind of clothing rather than the kind you have on? (colder, other kinds not available,..)

- How were all these things made? (by hand,...)

- What could this be used for? (don't know,...)

- Why is it hard to guess the use of this object? (never saw anything like it before, we don't have things like it,...)

Whether or not the discussion follows this direction is immaterial. What is important is maintaining a searching, questioning quality in the pupils' consideration of the tools and the people.

2. <u>See the Trek film</u> (approx. 12 min.)

Trek film projector screen

Show the Trek film. Emphasize that it portrays the people who actually made the four objects that the children have handled. During the film, encourage the children to find these objects, or ones similar to them, being used by the Eskimos. Emphasize the many facts about the Eskimos' lives that the children had "read" from the objects. Point out that these people are on <u>ice over a bay</u> rather than on land as it may appear. The ice is covered with several feet of hard-packed snow.

3. See how the winter camp in the film is arranged and who the people are.....

diagram of camp

Examine the "camp layout" with the children. Emphasize that it is the actual arrangment of the igloos the Netsilik built in the film.

You might wish to make a game of learning the Netsilik names by "introducing" the children to the members of the camp. Remember that the names are those of actual people, the Eskimos in the film. Encourage the children to learn the names of the family pictured so they can use them naturally throughout the unit.

Itimangnark--(i-ti-mahng'-nahrk), the hunter
Kingnuk--(king'-nook), his wife

Umayapik--(oo-mi-ah'-pik), his son

Note that there are six families in the camp.

4. See Where Pelly Bay is.....

map (reverse side of diagram)

Point out Pelly Bay on the map. Stress that the Netsilik live in Canada, not in Alaska or Greenland as do those Eskimos we commonly hear about. Remind the children again that the winter camp is on the ice over the Bay.

Explain that tomorrow they will find out what animals live under the ice, and what the name "Netsilik" means.

NOTES ON THE TREK FILM

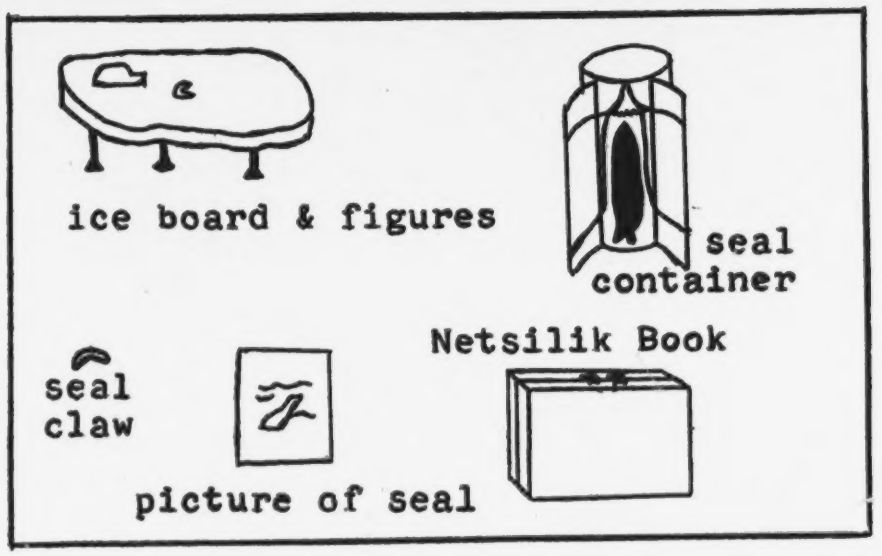
The film opens with a general view of the Pelly Bay region. The hills around the perimeter of the Bay can be seen in the distance. People come into view traveling on the snow and ice of the Bay to a new campsite. There are six families in the group, around 24 people. Dogs pull the sleds. The family rests, the children play briefly, and then the trek continues.

The families stop when they think they are in a good seal hunting place, and when the snow is right for igloo building. Itimangnark measures the depth of the snow with a bone probe, then starts clearing the area with a bone knife. (Both the probe and the knife are identical to those included in the box for the children's examination in Lesson 1.) The snow knife is used for cutting blocks of snow for the new igloos as the actual building of the camp is begun.

This sequence was filmed in March, and the weather is probably around 20 degrees below zero with a strong wind blowing.

FOCUS:

The breathing habits of the seal, the animal the Netsilik hunt in winter.



2. SEALS

ACTIVITIES:

1. Set up the camp on the ice and the animals underneath

This activity should clarify the position of the people and the sea animals, with relation to the ice between them.

ice board
figures

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Place the "ice board" so all can see it. Ask the class to recall the Trek film and guess what this object represents. It is important for the youngsters to realize that the "board" depicts not just ice, but the complete strata of two or three feet of hard-packed snow on top of six to nine feet of pack ice.

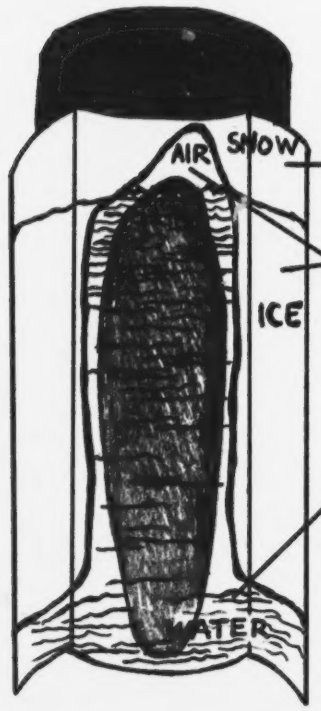
Ask them to remember what was on top of this snow and ice in the Trek film. As a child recalls a person or object, let him choose a figure representing that object and stick it on the ice. Continue until the entire scene in the film is accounted for. (Though not all figures are necessary or recognizable at this point, put them all out for the children to use. The bending man will be recognized as a hunter in Lesson 3; Nuliajuk--the woman/seal--will be recognized in Lesson 7.)

Ask what animals might live under the ice. Have the children hang the seal and fish figures under the ice in the "water". Ask a child to look under the ice and tell what he sees (holes). (Note: Leave the ice board out in the classroom during the unit for the children to use in free times.)

2. Examine the seal container.....

The children learn the breathing habits of the seal.

seal container
with seal inside
seal claw
picture



Place the seal container with the "seal" inside before the class; open the doors. (The children should NOT have seen this before.) Tell the class this is a hole like the ones in the ice board; but here it is almost real size. Be sure the children understand they are looking at a cut-away of the ice and hole from the side, not from underneath or from above.

Help the class figure out the physical set-up of a breathing hole. Ask what each part of the diagram on the container represents.

- What is this?
- Then this would be...?
- And this...?
- What would fill the space between the water and the top of the snow?

Now that the physical set-up of the hole is clear, ask this question:

- Why is the seal here in this oddly-shaped hole?

The answer to this question is most important because it is necessary for an understanding of the seal hunt. The information that should come out in answering this question is given below.

- How does a seal breathe?
  The seal is a mammal, not a fish; it must breathe air into its lungs through its nose.

- How does it breathe in summer when there is no ice?
  It breathes simply by swimming to the surface and sticking its nose into the air.

- How does it breathe in winter when the ice is 6-9 feet thick?
  As the ice begins to form the seal makes a hole with its clawed flippers. As more ice forms, he claws it away when he needs to breathe.

- Does a seal need more than one breathing hole?
  A seal swims over a large area looking for fish. It gets out of breath after about 20 minutes, and must find a breathing hole. It stays in the hole for 10 minutes, taking in the air it needs. A seal never uses the breathing hole of another seal, so it must have many breathing holes of its own.

If you feel that drawings on the board would help the class visualize how the breathing hole is formed, see the drawings in the Netsilik Book under "Breathing Hole." At some point in the lesson, take the "seal" from its "hole" so the children may touch it. Show the picture of a seal as you wish.

3. Learn why the Netsilik have come out on the ice..

Lead the children to conclude why the Eskimos, with all their belongings, have come out to this barren spot on the ice. (to hunt the seal) Tell the class that Netsilik means "people of the seal."

Pose the following problem for the children to think about:

- How might the Netsilik hunter go about catching a seal?

Tell the children that tomorrow they will see the Netsilik on a seal hunt.

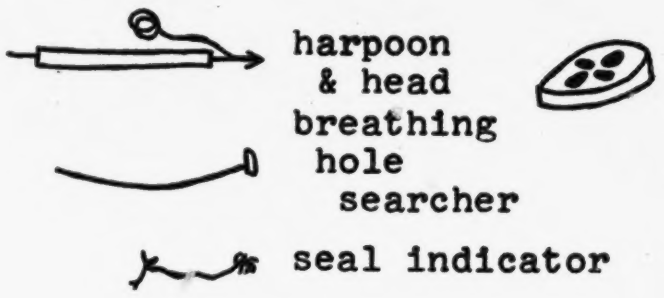
4. Introduce the Netsilik Book..

Netsilik Book

Show the class the Netsilik Book. Open the first packet of cards. Tell them they can learn from this Book how igloos are made, how husky dogs are treated, and many other interesting things. Show them how to use it. (Directions are inside.) You may want to appoint a librarian to take charge of the Book. Encourage the children to read the Book in their spare time. The Book often elaborates on things in the lessons, such as seals. You might wish to have a child tell the class more about seals.

FOCUS:

The seal hunt, with emphasis on the highly efficient hunting tools designed by the Netsilik.



Seal Hunt film

Teacher--projector & screen
Open 2nd packet in Netsilik Book.

3. SEAL HUNT I

ACTIVITIES:

1. Examine tools....

The continued "reading" of artifacts should help make the children aware of the resourcefulness of the Netsilik.

seal indicator
harpoon and
harpoon head
breathing hole
searcher

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Arrange the children in three groups. Pass the artifacts around, telling the class only that they are seal-hunting tools. Let each group examine each tool for a few moments working on these questions:

- What are they used for in the seal hunt?
- What are they made of?

Encourage the children once again to "read" the objects carefully. Like the objects in Lesson 1, these were created by the men in the Trek film, and were sent to us from Pelly Bay.

When each group has seen all the tools, let them discuss their ideas and tentative answers to the above questions.

2. See Seal Hunt film.....
(approx. 30 min.)

Seal Hunt Film
projector
screen

During the film, encourage the class to recognize Itimangnark and others. Stress watching how the Netsilik hunters use the tools the children just examined. The technology of seal hunting is complex. Don't worry if the children do not grasp everything that the film offers; unanswered questions will serve as a good springboard to later discussion.

Be prepared for widely varying reactions from the children when they see the scenes showing a successful hunt, which of course means killing a seal. Allow them time to talk about their reactions if they wish. It might help to remind them that the hunting and killing of seals is the great goal of every Netsilik man, and only in this way can they sustain their own lives.

3. Reconsider the tools in light of information from the film.

3 tools used in first activity

Following the film, refer again to the three tools, summarizing their use in the hunt. Refer back to the questions posed before the showing of the film and to the guesses the children made at that time regarding the use of the tools and how they were made.

(Note: One of the ice board figures can represent a hunter waiting at a breathing hole in the characteristic bending position.)

Points that might come up in discussion:

- Is seal hunting a sport to the Netsilik?
- Where does the meat on our dinner tables come from?
- What methods does our society use to get meat?

NOTES ON THE SEAL HUNT FILM

This film shows a day of seal hunting, interspersed with flashbacks to the women's and children's doings back at the camp.

At the beginning of the film the families are shown waking inside their igloos early in the morning. The first family is that of Itimangnark, Kingnuk, and Umayapik. The dogs have been sleeping outside, but waken when the first hunter appears. The hunters prepare for the day's hunt, making ready the harpoons and sleds, and harnessing the dogs. Itimangnark slings his hunting bag over his head and the men are off on a seal hunt.

Kingnuk is shown in the igloo at camp. She is chewing the boot she is making to soften the leather. At the same time she tends the cooking.

Back on the ice fields we see the men have already traveled a good distance from camp but are going still further. The ice on their hair and mustaches indicates the coldness of their surroundings.

At the camp again we see Anningaat and Kringartok playing with Anningaat's baby in the double igloo.

The men on the hunt have now unharnessed the dogs. The camera follows several of the hunters and their dogs in search of breathing holes. With the help of his dogs, Itimangnark finds a breathing hole. He checks it with his probe, smells to see if it is in current use, then calls his discovery to the other hunters, "Aklo!" (breathing hole), and proceeds to set up his hunting equipment to make a catch. He scoops out the snow above the breathing hole. Then, using the breathing hole searcher, made of bone, he discovers the shape of the hole under the ice so he will know in which direction to aim his harpoon. Next, he sets the harpoon down through the snow to keep the hole open, and fills in the snow again above the hole. With this done he removes

the harpoon, leaving a tiny air passage to the breathing hole. The dogs are led away from the hole so they will not disturb at a crucial time. After removing the rest of his hunting tools from his hunting bag, Itimangnark stands on the bag for extra warmth. He prepares the indicator by freezing a small fiber of down to it, and then setting it over the hole where the breath of a seal will cause it to move slightly. He readies his harpoon, places it on the bone harpoon rests, then waits and watches intensely. (All of the tools and equipment that Itimangnark uses are included in the Box. Some of the tools in the film are made partly of steel and wood.

Another hunter is shown preparing the breathing hole he has found. He builds a shelter of snow blocks to protect himself from the weather. Still a third hunter is seen preparing his harpoon and waiting.

Back at the double igloo in camp, Kingnuk has come to visit Anningaat. Fish is eaten and the children play games with stones. Anningaat carries her baby in the hood of her parka. Outside the igloo one of the girls starts to make "dishes" of snow. She uses the woman's knife, the "ulo", to cut the snow away. She is joined in her play by two younger children.

On the ice fields the hunters have been waiting for a long time. Itimangnark notes a slight movement of the down on the indicator, telling him a seal has come to the hole to breathe. With a forceful thrust of his harpoon, he makes the catch. Before hauling the seal from the water,he pierces its skull with the sharp end of his snow scoop, then attaches the toggle and line through the skull. With this he is able to haul the heavy, dead seal from the water. The other hunters gather around and all enjoy a "snack" of fresh seal blubber and seal liver. They then head back as a group for the camp.

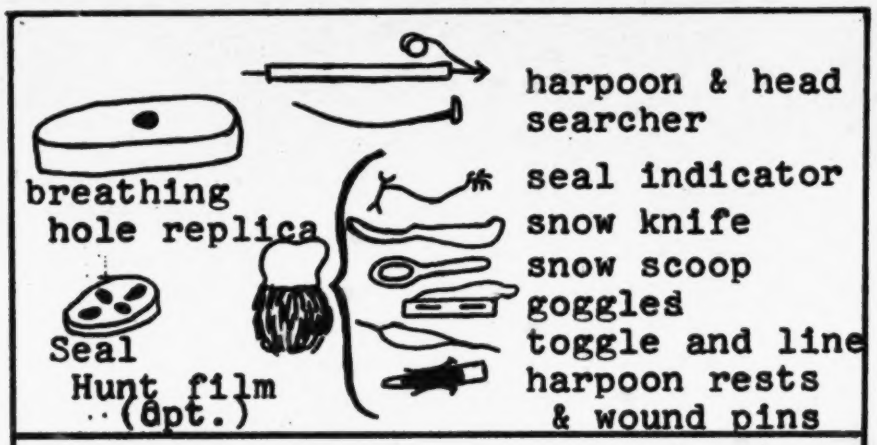
As the hunters come into camp, the children are shown, still playing "house" with their snow implements.

All enter the igloo. One of the older children seals the door shut for the night to provide added warmth and protection. The family is shown, after its long day of activities, settled for the night with one last flame in the lamp left burning.

4. SEAL HUNT II

FOCUS:

What the Netsilik hunter does at the breathing hole.



Teacher--projector & screen(opt)
paper & crayons

ACTIVITIES:

1. Set up hunting tools using the "breathing hole" replica.....

This activity should help clarify some of the techniques of breathing hole hunting and encourage deeper appreciation of the skills developed by the Netsilik.

breathing hole replica
all hunt tools
(optional:
Seal Hunt film
projector
screen)

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Ask the children to recall the hunting film they saw in the previous lesson. Show them the breathing hole replica. See if they can guess what it represents.

Bring out all the tools, including those that are new to the children as well as the ones they have seen before.

Have one child try using the tools at the replica, just as Itimangnark in the film used his tools at the breathing hole: digging down to the ice with the snow knife and scoop; searching the hole's shape with the searcher; filling in the hole; using the harpoon to keep a tiny tunnel open to it; etc. Several different children should be encouraged to try setting up the tools either at this time or during free time during the day. If any child has trouble in setting up the sequence, encourage another to help him.

A second showing of the Hunt film at some time during the day may prove helpful in clarifying the procedure at the breathing hole.

Following is a brief description of the uses of the tools in the Seal Hunt film.

- snow knife: cuts away blocks of snow to get at the breathing hole.

- snow scoop: scoops away loose snow at the hole; pierces skull of seal to permit looping the toggle and line through it, so the seal can be pulled out and dragged home.

- breathing hole searcher: enables hunter to gauge shape of breathing hole, so he can aim harpoon accurately.

- seal indicator: tells hunter when a seal is breathing in the hole.

- harpoon rest: holds harpoon while hunter waits.

- harpoon and harpoon head: harpoons seal; probes snow to find exact location of hole.

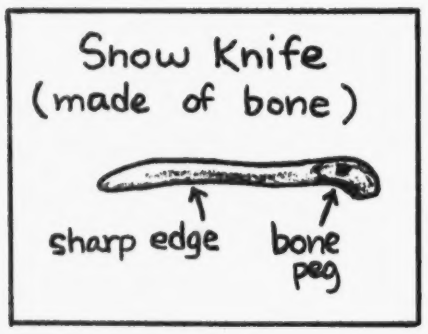
- toggle and line: hauls seal out of hole; drags trophy home.

- hunter's bag: carries tools; keeps hunter's feet warm.

- wound pins (not used in film): close the wound made by harpoon.

- goggles (not used in film): cut down snow glare.

Each child can now make his own "tool collection" by drawing accurate pictures of these rare tools. Place the tools at different points about the room, or pass them among the pupils.



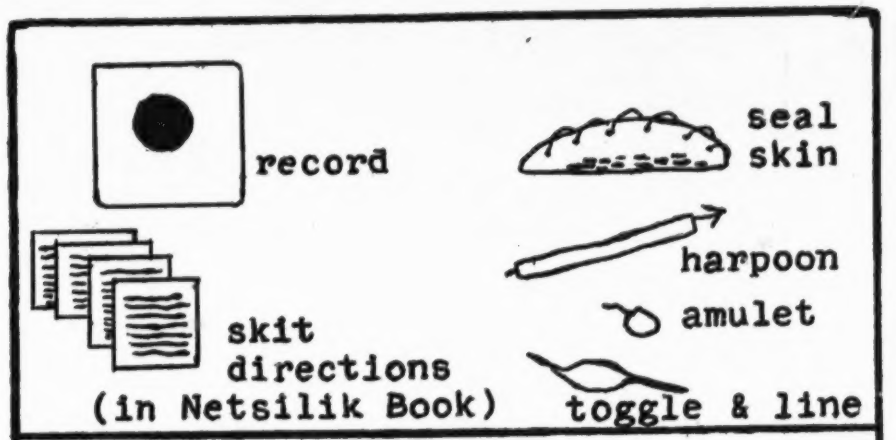
The "collection" aspect may be highlighted by having the children draw only one picture on each piece of paper, and by using special paper like oak tag.

Illustrate on the blackboard how the children may supplement their drawings with labels to make them more effective.

5. SEAL BELIEFS

FOCUS:

Netsilik beliefs about seals.



Teacher--record player
Open 3rd packet in Netsilik Book.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Hear a hunter's thoughts about why he hasn't caught a seal...

This story should help show the feelings of a man faced with the fears of eking out an existence in a harsh environment. His beliefs provide ways to cope with these fears.

record
record player

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Introduce by asking how many seals the six men caught in the hunt movie. (one) Tell children that sometimes no seals are caught for days, and that during extreme winters, some Netsilik have starved to death.

Explain that today the children will hear from a hunter (Mangak) whose camp has not caught a seal for 11 days. Focus on why the hunter thinks no seals have been caught, and what Netsilik hunters do to make sure seals come to their breathing holes.

Play the record. ("Hunter's Story")

2. Prepare skits showing ways the Netsilik please the seal so it will let itself be caught...

4 skit cards (children's cards in Netsilik Book under "Pleasing the seal")
seal skin
toggle and line
amulet
harpoon and head

Explain to the children that they are about to learn what a hunter does to please the seal. Emphasize the importance of these rituals to the Netsilik hunter, who believes seals will not come to him if he neglects pleasing them. Talk about this so the children will absorb the seriousness of these beliefs, and tend to do the skits in the right spirit. As you can imagine, the children may be silly--let them get this out of their systems and proceed.

Divide the class into four groups. Explain that each group will learn a different way the Netsilik please seals. Stress that each group keep their way a secret, because after practicing, they will present their way in a skit to see if the rest of the class can figure it out.

Pass out the skit cards. Spell out the procedure carefully to the children. Each card tells one way the Netsilik please the seal, and explains how to present this way in a skit. Stress careful rehearsing of the skits, using objects from the Box as suggested; share the objects during rehearsals. Emphasize that the children must make their pantomimed actions very specific so the rest of the class will be able to figure out the way of pleasing seals.

Have the groups practice their skits several times. They will probably need your guidance, so circulate among them, helping as needed.

← Make an outline of an igloo on the floor in which to act out the skits. Either draw one with chalk or lay one out with string and tape.

3. Act out skits.....

Have each group act out its skit in the igloo while the rest of the class watches. Stress that the class's job is to figure out each group's way of pleasing the seal. Keep the class focused on the importance of these acts to the Netsilik. A hunter who neglects these acts would be afraid he wouldn't catch any seals.

If the class cannot discover from the skit the way of pleasing the seal, have the group giving the skit explain.

The four ways to please a seal are:
- hunter carries an amulet
- hunter says magic words
- wife of hunter gives seal a drink of fresh water in the igloo
- hunter lays seal on fresh, clean snow in the igloo

Points that might come up in discussion:

- When the hunter does these rituals, what happens to the seal? to the hunter?
- What do your pupils do when they want something badly? Wish on a star, on birthday candles? Does this work?
- Do the Netsilik really believe seals have souls, and that men can befriend them?
- What particular beliefs of ours might the Netsilik find strange?

SCRIPT OF "HUNTER'S STORY"

I am called Mangak. I have a story of hunger. For ten days I have stood over a breathing hole with the other hunters, ready with my harpoon, waiting. Ten days. No seal has come to be caught.

My wife Qungak has only one small chunk of meat left. My children's bellies are empty. My dogs are starving. So it is with the whole camp.

I fear hunger. One year twenty-five out of a hundred of our people died of hunger. We all fear hunger.

I ask, why are no seals coming to our breathing holes? Why has no one caught a seal in ten days? And I wonder, has someone in our camp been unfriendly to seals, so that they stay away?

I will tell you what we Netsilik believe about seals so you can see what I mean: We believe that every seal has a soul -- just as men have. That soul lives in the seal. But when the seal dies, his soul lives on, and is born in a new seal body, and swims happily in the deep water again.

A man can befriend a seal's soul, and it will let itself be caught again and again by that man. Seals like to be caught by men--<u>if</u> men treat them with kindness. So if a hunter wants to catch seal, he is careful to try to please the souls of all seals he catches. There are many ways we hunters please a seal's soul.

But if men are unfriendly to a seal's soul, if they do not do the things they must to please the soul, <u>then</u> the seal will stay away from breathing holes where men are hunting. They will not let the unfriendly hunters catch them.

I, Mangak, wonder if men in our camp have been unfriendly to a seal's soul. I wonder if some hunters have neglected to do the things we do to please the seal when it is caught. Perhaps this is why no seals are coming to our breathing holes, and we are near starving.

COPY OF SKIT CARD #1

READ THIS WHOLE PAGE ALOUD TO YOUR GROUP.

HERE IS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.
KEEP IT A SECRET FROM THE REST OF THE CLASS.

The Netsilik believe that seals are always thirsty. One way to please the seal is to give it a drink of water in a special way.

THIS IS HOW TO PRACTICE YOUR SKIT.

Do this whole skit in silence, letting your actions tell the story.

Choose a hunter and wife. The rest of your group are the family.

The hunter goes off on a seal hunt. The rest of you seat yourselves around the edge of an imaginary igloo.

The hunter returns dragging the seal he has caught. He carries it inside the igloo. The wife pretends she has a piece of ice in her hand. She lets it drip slowly into the mouth of the seal.

Use the seal skin, toggle and line from the Box if you wish.

LATER YOU WILL DO YOUR SKIT FOR THE CLASS SO THEY CAN TRY TO GUESS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.

COPY OF SKIT CARD #2

READ THIS WHOLE PAGE ALOUD TO YOUR GROUP.

HERE IS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.
KEEP IT A SECRET FROM THE REST OF THE CLASS.

The Netsilik believe that a dead seal must never lie on the dirty floor of an igloo because its soul won't like it. So they put fresh clean snow on the floor before bringing the seal in.

THIS IS HOW TO PRACTICE YOUR SKIT.

Do this whole skit in silence, letting your actions tell the story.

Choose one hunter and one wife. The rest of your group are the family.

The hunter goes off on a seal hunt. The rest of you seat yourselves around the edge of an imaginary igloo.

The hunter returns to the igloo dragging a seal. He waits while the wife puts clean snow onto the igloo floor. Then the hunter drags the seal into the igloo, and lays it on the fresh snow.

Use the harpoon and head, seal skin, and toggle and line from the Box if you wish.

LATER YOU WILL DO YOUR SKIT FOR THE CLASS SO THEY CAN TRY TO GUESS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.

COPY OF SKIT CARD #3

READ THIS WHOLE PAGE ALOUD TO YOUR GROUP.

HERE IS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.
KEEP IT A SECRET FROM THE REST OF THE CLASS.

The Netsilik believe that seals won't come to breathing holes unless they like the hunter who is waiting there. One way to get a seal to like you is to carry a special, powerful charm called an amulet.

THIS IS HOW TO PRACTICE YOUR SKIT.

Do this whole skit in silence, letting your actions tell the story.

Choose two hunters. Divide the rest of your group into families for each hunter.

Each family sits around the edge of its imaginary igloo.

The two hunters prepare to go on a seal hunt. One of them shows his amulet to everyone, without telling what it is. Both hunters go off. After a short time, the hunters return. Only the one who had the amulet is dragging a seal. He looks happy because his amulet made him lucky.

Use the amulet, seal skin, and toggle and line from the Box if you wish.

LATER YOU WILL DO YOUR SKIT FOR THE CLASS SO THEY CAN TRY TO GUESS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.

COPY OF SKIT CARD #4

READ THIS WHOLE PAGE ALOUD TO YOUR GROUP.

HERE IS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.
KEEP IT A SECRET FROM THE REST OF THE CLASS.

The Netsilik believe a hunter can use magic words to make an animal come to him. The hunter must say the magic words softly, but very clearly. He must say them many times. He must never say them when others can hear.

THIS IS HOW TO PRACTICE YOUR SKIT.

Do this whole skit in silence, letting your actions tell the story.

Choose two hunters. Divide the rest of your group into families for each hunter.

Each family sits around the edge of its imaginary igloo.

One hunter goes out of his igloo where no one in the igloo can hear him. He reads the magic words so the rest of the class can hear.

Say these magic words three times:

"A seal it must be
Come here and see."

"Ka-ju-ak-ta-mik
Ta-ku-sa-rit."

The other hunter goes out of his igloo and says his magic words:

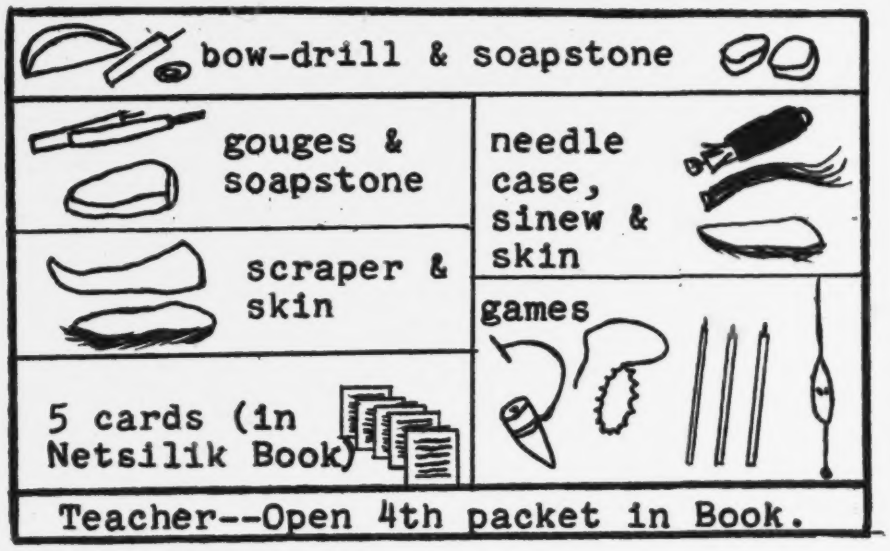
"Bring me a gift
An animal, one of those
That makes nice blood soup,
An animal from the sea
Not from the earth
You, Nuliajuk, bring me a gift."

Then both hunters go off to hunt.

LATER YOU WILL DO YOUR SKIT FOR THE CLASS SO THEY CAN TRY TO GUESS YOUR WAY OF PLEASING THE SEAL'S SOUL.

FOCUS:

The Netsilik making what they need to live from materials in their environment.



6. THE CAMP

ACTIVITIES:

1. <u>Learn what happens at the winter camp</u>.....

We hope that by trying out these activities the children will learn to appreciate some of the ingenious ways the Eskimo makes use of the meager materials in his environment. The seal in particular is used for food, clothing, shelter, and play.

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Get things started by asking the class to recall the Seal Hunt film with its flashbacks to camp doings. What was happening at camp?

Help the youngsters to concentrate on the things the Eskimo uses from his environment by posing questions like:

- Have you seen the Netsilik using any store-bought things? (No, except the raw wood and steel for tools that are bought or traded for from trading posts.)

- What can you conclude from this? (The Netsilik probably don't have stores; they probably have to make their own things.)

- What could the Netsilik use from their surroundings to make tools, houses, clothing, toys, etc.? (animal skins and bones, stone, driftwood; the steel and wood they buy.)

Point out that many of the things done at a winter camp <u>use parts of the seal</u>, or are derived from seal products. Suggest that the children keep on the alert for seal products; we will go into some detail on the seal's usage in camp activities.

bow-drill & soapstone
gouges & soapstone
scraper & skin
needle case, sinew & skin
games
cards in Netsilik Book

Choose three areas in the room:

- for men's work (bow-drilling and gouging in soapstone)
- for women's work (scraping and sewing)
- for children's play (spinning bullroarer, etc.)

Place the materials and the explanatory cards (found in the Netsilik Book in the fourth packet) for each activity in the proper area. Newspapers placed under the drilling and gouging will save you grief.

First have two groups of girls do the women's work while two groups of boys do the men's work; let a fifth group try the games. Rotate the children among the activities as you see best. Eventually all the children should have a chance to try each activity. If you don't have at least an hour, we suggest you not rush the children through all the activities; rather, extend this lesson into a second day, or let children do the activities in spare time.

2. Discuss uses of the seal.....

Ask individual children to bring the materials for each activity to the front of the room, and point out what they had to do with seal, if anything. (Cards used for each activity have this information. You might want to mention other things from the environment that are used, such as caribou bone for tools.)

Ask what other ways the Netsilik might use the seal. (meat and inner organs for food) In the Netsilik Book under "Uses of Seal" is a chart of many other things the Netsilik make from the seal. Perhaps your class would enjoy making a large chart to hang up in the room.

(Note: Along with the other camp activity materials in the seal skin is a bag of seal flipper bones. Several

games are played with these bones. (See "Bone Game" card in Netsilik Book.) Introduce them whenever you wish for free time use; you may need to explain the games.)

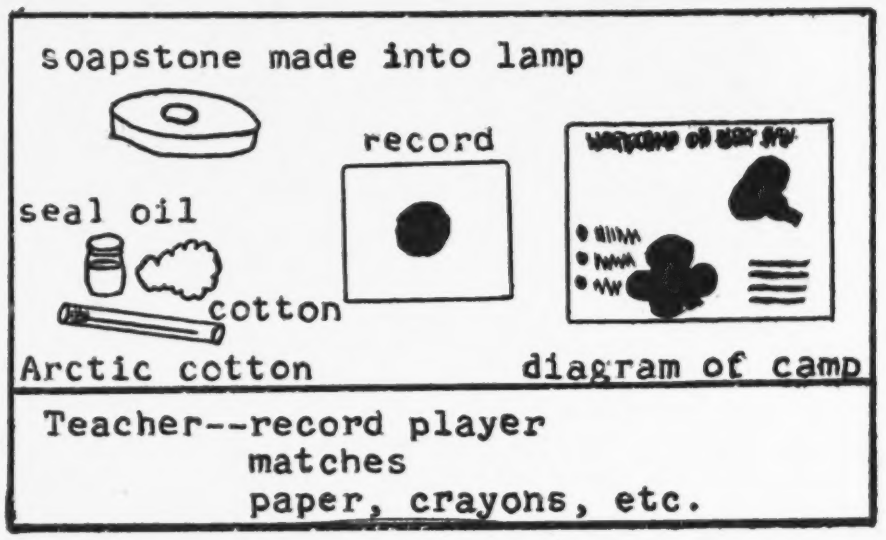
Points that might come up in discussion:

- Why do the Netsilik hunt more seals in winter than seagulls or fish? (seals have fur, blubber, are bigger, etc.)
- Imagine a store being opened at Pelly Bay. What changes might occur in camp work because of the things in the store?
- What things do your parents make, instead of buying them ready-made?

FOCUS:

Netsilik beliefs about Nuliajuk, the sea spirit, who controls the seals and other sea beasts.

7. NULIAJUK, THE SEA SPIRIT



Teacher--record player
matches
paper, crayons, etc.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Light the lamp and hear the Nuliajuk myth....

Building on Lesson 5 (Seal Beliefs), this lesson should further understanding of how myths help the Netsilik make sense out of his life.

diagram of camp
soapstone lamp made in Lesson 6
oil and cotton
Arctic cotton
matches
record
record player

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Explain that when the Netsilik have caught enough seals for a while they have time to build a very big igloo. In this igloo they might tell stories in the light of a soapstone lamp, as we will today.

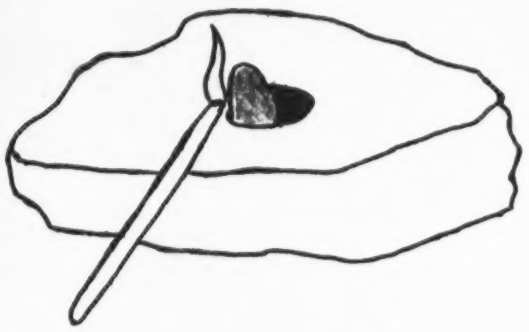
The big igloo at the particular camp in the films uses four small igloos for support. See the diagram of the camp for its location, shown in dotted lines.

With chalk or strings, draw a circle representing a big igloo on the floor. Seat the children around the inside edge of the igloo circle. Turn off the lights, pull the curtains down, and light the lamp. This will create a special atmosphere, and focus the children on listening.

Lighting the lamp:

The Netsilik use seal oil for fuel and Arctic cotton for wicks. A sample of the Arctic cotton is included, but please use the regular cotton as a wick in your lamp.

Dip a piece of cotton in the oil. Put the cotton in the hole and pour on a little more oil. Push the



cotton to one side to let in some air. Dip one end of the stick in the oil and light it with a match. Then light the cotton with the stick. This may take a few minutes.

Introduce the Nuliajuk myth with a brief reminder of yesterday's camp doings, emphasizing the many things seals provide. Point out that the story they will hear, a very important one to the Netsilik, is about the sea spirit, Nuliajuk, who controls the seals. Once the children have seen how essential seals are to the Netsilik, perhaps they can see why the Netsilik have a spirit like Nuliajuk.

Play the record. ("Nuliajuk")

2. Discuss the myth...

Ask what this myth might mean to an Eskimo. For example, suppose that a man like Mangak (in Lesson 5) fears death by starvation.

- How would the Nuliajuk myth help Mangak get rid of some of his fears?
(It gives him a way to explain the lack of seals, and a way to fight his fear of starvation by following Nuliajuk's laws.)

Talk about how the Netsilik have trouble finding out what life is all about, just as all the rest of us do. Show the class that the Nuliajuk myth helps the Eskimo explain his life, make sense of it. Try to help the children understand that the Eskimo myths are just as emotionally and spiritually "true" to them as stories from the Bible are to many of us, and that both are used in the same way. This last is important as one more attempt to create empathy for the Eskimos on the part of the class.

3. Choose scenes from the myth and draw them in a mural...

large paper
crayons
etc.

Tell the class they are going to draw scenes from the Nuliajuk story, and then put them together in a large mural. Call for suggestions as to what scenes should be illustrated, and list them on the board. Once the class has decided on the sequence they think best, they can set to work, in groups or individually, to create several large panels, which can then be hung in sequence. The point here is that the mural should tell the story in pictorial terms, as the myth tells it in verbal terms.

An alternate activity is to act out the scenes of the myth.

(Note: Your class may keep the lamp they made after the Box is returned. Other oils can be used for fuel.)

(Note: The ice board figure of a woman/seal represents Nuliajuk, though she may be imagined in other forms.)

Questions that might come up in discussion:

- Do we have any stories that help us make sense out of the world we live in, like the Nuliajuk story helps the Netsilik?

Note: To prepare for Lesson 8 you may need to tighten the skin on the drum. Dampen very thoroughly and let dry in a warm place (overnight perhaps). It should never be hit on the head (the stretched skin) as that will loosen the skin, giving it a flat sound. Hit it only on the edge of the rim.

SCRIPT OF "NULIAJUK"

Once, long ago, there lived a little girl named Nuliajuk. Nuliajuk was an orphan. She had no mother, no father, no one to sew clothers for her, no one to feed her, no one to take care of her. Because Nuliajuk had no one to care for her, nobody wanted her. The other children didn't play with her much, and sometimes were unkind.

One day the people in her camp decided to go to a new hunting ground, across the water. The men made rafts by tying kayaks together. The women packed together the tents, lamps, cooking pots, skins, and clothes.

At last the rafts were made; but there wasn't much room on them. The people piled their belongings on. No, there wasn't much room. Finally, the mothers and fathers and children began climbing on the raft. Nuliajuk climbed on, too. But just as her boot touched the raft, they seized her and threw her into the water. No one cared about her. Nuliajuk got hold of the raft and began pulling herself up on it. But they cut her fingers off--and Nuliajuk fell back into the water.

She began to sink and, as she sank, her cut-off fingers floated to the surface of the water. They began to grow and grow. They no longer looked like fingers at all. They were a different shape. They were black. And they began swimming around the raft. They were seals! And this is how seals came to be.

While all this was happening, Nuliajuk herself sank and sank and sank to the bottom of the sea. There she became a spirit, a sea spirit. Nuliajuk, the sea spirit. Because seals had formed from her cut-off fingers, Nuliajuk became mother of all seals and other sea beasts. She also became mistress of everything else alive--even the land beasts. And Nuliajuk had great power over all the beasts of the sea and land. Over all the beasts that men hunt!

So men began to fear Nuliajuk, for she controlled all the animals they hunted. And Nuliajuk hated men for what they had done to her, for throwing her into the sea when she was a little girl. With revenge in mind, she watches men. She knows everything they do. And if men break taboos, or rules, Nuliajuk punishes them. She hides all the animals. She shuts up the seals in the drip basin under her lamp at the bottom of the sea. As long as the seals are inside the basin, there are no animals to hunt in the sea. And people must starve.

When Nuliajuk hides all the animals, men call on the shaman to help. Now a shaman is just a man; but he has special powers and he has helping spirits. Some shamans send their helping spirits to Nuliajuk herself to persuade her to be kind again. Other shamans rush down to Nuliajuk to frighten and overcome her. But there are also shamans who draw Nuliajuk herself up to the surface of the land. This is how they do it. They gather the people in an igloo. Then they tie a hook onto the end of a long seal thong, throw the hook out of the entrance way to the igloo, and block the entrance with a snow block. The helping spirits then take this hook and hook it into Nuliajuk, and the shaman hauls her up from the sea into the entrance passage of the igloo.

Everyone in the igloo can hear Nuliajuk yelling and trying to break the snow block so she can get into the igloo and frighten everybody to death. There is great fear in the igloo. But the shaman watches the snow block so Nuliajuk never gets into the house. Only when Nuliajuk promises to release all the seals into the sea again does the shaman take her off the hook and let her go down to the bottom of the sea.

There, Nuliajuk lets out some seals for men to hunt, but she would rather mankind starved, because no one took pity on her when she was a little girl living on the earth.

8. DRUM DANCE

FOCUS:

The drum dance, and the trek away from camp.

ACTIVITIES:

1. <u>Learn about the drum dance</u>.....

This lesson should show that the Netsilik do not spend all their time struggling to keep alive. They feast and play games and tell tales, make music and dance together -- much like any other group of human beings.

drum drumstick Drum Dance film projector screen

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE:

Join the children in recalling scenes from the films when the Eskimos were having fun. From this brief discussion, it should emerge clearly that the Netsilik's life is not just drudgery and hardship, but is happy and frolicsome at times, just as ours is.

Tell the children that today they will do something else the Netsilik do for fun: a drum dance in the big igloo. Form the big igloo again, seat the children around the edge, and put up the screen where all can see it.

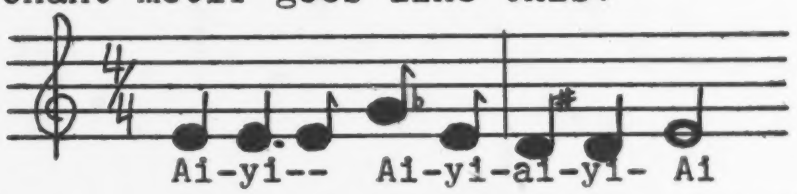
Show the drum, explaining that the Netsilik play it in a special way, different from our way. Don't let the children use it until they know how. They can learn how to strike it by watching Itimangnark play his drum in today's film. (The drum skin should have been tightened before this time, as explained at the end of Lesson 7.)

Show the film. <u>STOP immediately</u> when the film blacks out toward the end. (You will show the last part at the end of the lesson.) During the first part, direct the class to watch closely how Itimangnark strikes the drum, so they can do it like he does when their turns come. Note that the drum in the film is bigger, but otherwise the one in the Box is the same.

2. Do the drum dance.....

record
record player

Each child will probably want to try drumming along in time with the chanting. Rather than repeat the film, you may wish to use the record of the chanting, made from the sound track of the film. STRESS THAT THE DRUM MUST NEVER BE HIT ON TOP BECAUSE THE SKIN WILL STRETCH AND LOSE ITS TONE. Play the drum on the edge only, as Itimangnark did in the film. Try to imitate not only his manner of tapping with the drum stick, but also his way of standing and bending and swaying, for he "dances" as he plays.

Encourage the children to chant along with the Netsilik in the movie and on the record, as well as with whichever child is drumming. The much-repeated chant motif goes like this:

(transposed to key of C)

Let all the children who want to do it, try drumming and "dancing".

3. Watch the trek away from camp...

The trek away should add new dimensions to the children's ideas about traditional Netsilik life: that these people are nomads, wandering from hunting spot to hunting spot, setting up camp after camp, never settling in villages, always following the seals and other animals upon which their lives depend.

Drum Dance film
(last part only)

Tell the class that they are about to have their last look at the Netsilik Eskimos. You might ask them to close their eyes and recall the first film they saw: the trek across the snow.

Project the last section of the film; it shows the Netsilik people trekking away from their camp with all their belongings.

After the film, you might ask questions like these:

- Why do you think the Netsilik are leaving? (There are no more seals to be hunted in this area.)
- Where are the Netsilik going? (To set up a new camp, hopefully where there are more seals.)
- What will happen at the new camp? (They'll continue to live in the same way as at the old camp.)

NOTES ON THE DRUM DANCE FILM

The drum dance is held in the big igloo so all can come. This big igloo was built connecting the four smaller igloos, using their walls for support. Thus in the film you can see into the interiors of these smaller igloos, each belonging to a family.

Itimangnark is the dancer. He doesn't "dance" in our sense of the word. Rather he hits his large drum rhythmically, bending his knees and swaying to his drum rhythm. As he dances, his family might sing some verses about him while the rest of the people chant along. The drum dance comes to a kind of climax, and then gradually slows down and fades away.

Though our film is not long enough to show this, after a while another man replaces Itimangnark. And then another man, and another man, until finally the people become weary and the drum dance is over.

The last part of the film (following the blackout) shows the empty, broken igloos that the group is leaving. Before departing, some of the women lay seal skulls in the snow pointing in the direction the Netsilik are going. This is to let the seals' spirits know which way the people are going so that the seals can follow them.

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Ellen Shapiro

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A valuable source on the Netsilik will be published in 1967:

The Netsilik Eskimos, by Asen Balikci, Doubleday Co., New York

ABOUT THE MATCH BOX PROJECT

In June, 1964, under a contract with the United States Office of Education, we started the MATCH Box Project at the Children's Museum. The term "MATCH" stands for Materials and Activities for Teachers and CHildren. A MATCH Box contains materials, equipment, supplies and activities that work together to foster the teaching/learning of specific subjects at the elementary school level. The Boxes contain a high proportion of real objects and require little or no auxiliary equipment or supplies from the school. In every Box there is a Teacher's Guide which serves to organize and activate the three-way encounter between the materials, the teacher and the children.

MATCH Boxes are designed for the relatively intensive treatment of a subject over two weeks, and can be circulated among teachers through material resource centers, libraries, museums, AV departments.

As the Boxes are being developed, materials and activities are tried out in the schools. Prototypes are then assembled, evaluated in local classrooms, and revised prior to distribution.

The first five MATCH Boxes, completed in September, 1965, were: GROUPING BIRDS (Grades K-2); THE CITY (1-3); THE ALGONQUINS (3,4); SEEDS (3,4); and A HOUSE OF ANCIENT GREECE (5,6).

The Box described in this guide is one of a second "generation" of Boxes completed in September, 1966: HOUSES (Grades 1-3); ANIMAL CAMOUFLAGE (2,3); NETSILIK ESKIMOS (3,4); MUSICAL SOUNDS AND SHAPES (3,4); ROCKS (5,6); JAPANESE FAMILY 1966 (5,6); and MEDIEVAL PEOPLE (5,6).

A third generation of Boxes will be finished in September, 1967.

Though the Boxes are our most tangible product, we use them and the developmental process itself as a method for studying the role that real materials play in teaching and learning, and as a way of seeking principles by which media may be combined to create effective educational systems.

This Box and this guide are prototypes and will be revised. We welcome your comments and criticisms. Please write to the MATCH Box Project, The Children's Museum, 60 Burroughs Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02130.

Fred H. Kresse
Project Director